

**January 19, 2017
Regular Session
City of Gaston**

Present: Mayor Tony **Hall**, Jerry **Spaulding**, David **Meeker**, Chris **Jeffries**, Rod **Hale**, and Don **Richter**, Councilor-elect: Bill **Martin**

Staff: City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette**, Public Works Director Brent **Whittaker**, City Clerk Sharon **Bregante-Candau**, Washington County Deputy Bobby **Wormington**

Absent: None

I. Mayor Tony **Hall** called the regular meeting to order at 7:01PM.

II. ROLL CALL: Recorder **Blanchette** conducted the roll call for the record with:

Councilor Jerry **Spaulding**: present

Councilor David **Meeker**: present

Mayor Tony **Hall**: present

Councilor Chris **Jeffries**: present

Councilor Rod **Hale**: present

Councilor Don **Richter**: present

Mayor **Hall** administered the oath of office to Bill **Martin**, David **Meeker**, and Don **Richter** as City Councilors and welcomed them to City Council.

III. ADDITIONS/CHANGES OR CORRECTIONS: Mayor **Hall** announced the addition of the Water Policy Review and Water Policy Resolution Adoption under New Business, the Hiland Water Contract Renewal under Old Business, and Employee Complaint under Complaints.

IV. STAFF REPORTS:

Police: Deputy **Wormington** reported for the months of November and December 2016. Stats for November included a total of 73 incidents with 16 call-ins, 57 self-initiated calls, and 23 traffic stops and citations. Other November business included completion of the compliance program, or Fix It Ticket, with the publication of the official pamphlets, which would make the process easier on the City Recorder. Contract hours: 128.5 hours expected, 155.5 hours provided. Stats for December include a total of 78 incidents with 18 call-ins, 60 self-initiated calls, 3 arrests, and 25 traffic stops and 7 citations. The first arrest involved a fight between two female adults at the Tree Lighting with one ending up in jail for assault. The second arrest involved a male juvenile cited for possession of 1.6 grams of marijuana at the school. The third arrest involved a female who trespassed repeatedly at the One Horse Tavern, taunting and provoking the bartender. The December's Shop-With-A-Cop program was successful with 12 elementary school kids from Gaston participating. Contract hours: 132.85 hours expected, 141 hours provided. Deputy **Wormington** addressed questions from Council. He would follow up again on the radar trailer. He had spoken with the semi-truck owner who was potentially illegally parked on Onion Lane. However, without a survey to determine the exact border between Onion Lane and the property, he could not officially cite the truck owner for trespassing or tow him because he had no victim and he did not know who the property owner was. The truck driver has been willing to move his truck to accommodate Fish & Wildlife access and other trucks' turning

movements. He was unaware of anyone occupying the old building on the Bart Brown property, although some kids were drinking alcohol in it until the south side entry was locked up. Mayor **Hall** stated the Public Works Director had contact information for the property, which was in probate, and the City would contact the owner to let them know what was happening. Councilor **Richter** said did not see anything problem with the truck driver parking his truck on Onion Lane, which was better than along the highway.

Public Works: Public Works Director **Whittaker** presented the reports for November and December 2016. The Water Rate Study completed by the City of Yamhill showed Gaston's water rate was at the upper end, but it was not the highest rate in the county. Staff has diligently worked to decrease the past due water accounts by \$15,767 from the \$21,000 past due in October to \$5,200 as of January 9th with \$3,800 captured in 14 payment plans, down from 26 payment plans in December. Staff would send Washington County the 2015 cross-connection survey found missing by the Washington County Water System Survey, as well as the 2016 survey. Staff research found no record that the City's new water tank was ever inspected for sediment and coatings after its initial filling in 2009. This item would need to be included in the next budget. He addressed questions from Council. Councilor **Spaulding** recalled the tanks were recoated when he was first on Council, probably in 2010/2011. Public Works Director **Whittaker** described the Gaston Intercessory Funding Trust (GIFT), the water assistance program developed at the Mayor's request to aid low-income families in the community. Focusing on charities rather than the Community Support budget line item to fund the program might avoid the kickback experienced by the City of Portland when using tax dollars to fund its Intercessory Fund Program. Legal issues were also involved with keeping the recipients anonymous and using public funds. Mayor **Hall** sought Council's permission to continue the City's dialogue with charitable and religious organizations interested in donating to GIFT. He agreed with Councilor **Spaulding's** suggestion to form a committee to determine eligibility for GIFT funds, adding the committee and Staff could consider how to move the GIFT Program forward. Councilors **Meeker**, **Martin**, and **Jeffries** volunteered to serve on the GIFT Program Committee. Public Works Director **Whittaker** reported on the meter reads, which he completed in six hours in December, while the January reads took four days with 100 to 125 meters frozen shut. Identified a serious problem at Cove Orchard's water meter which would require digging out the big vault, which also needed better structural support as the lid was starting to bend again after a prior fix within the last three months. The City had a huge water loss of 45% to 50%. Wireless meters were a potential solution to the problem. The benefits included automated leak detection, less Staff time, and 20-year warranties that graduated down after 10 years. The City does have the funds available and this was a tremendous opportunity to invest for the future. Future rate studies could justify scaling back on the water rates in the future, but right now, the current system needed help. He described two significant water leaks leading to a loss of 345,000 gallons per month, one of which he had fixed and the other, which was under Hedin Terrace, was scheduled for repair by Rick Henry. Approximately 260 of the City's 322 water meters needed to be replaced simply to address water loss, according to industry standards. The estimated 10 percent water loss per meter was costing the City \$110,000 in revenue and \$16,000 in raw costs, not including Staff costs. It cost \$96 to replace a regular meter and \$161 to upgrade to a meter with automated meter reading (AMR). The City could replace the meters in phases, knowing water meter costs increase by 4% to 5% per year, or do a bulk project, which meant contracting the work out. With the current surplus in the Water Fund, the City could contract out the work.

He updated on the pump replacement, which required additional cost to replace a faulty controller.

Following a brief discussion, **City Council** consented to authorize Public Works Director Whittaker to develop project costs for the new AMR meters and return with a proposal for review at the next Council meeting.

Public Works Director **Whittaker** requested approval for \$1,460.50 to purchase road construction signs, cones, and barricades for public work safety. Councilor **Hale** moved to approve \$1,460.50 for Public Works to purchase safety signage, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nay: 0. **Mayor Hall** asked Public Works Director **Whittaker** to submit the request for handicapped signs at the next City Council meeting.

Public Works Director **Whittaker** requested up to \$2,000 to purchase traffic and street signs to replace those in bad condition. **Mayor Hall** called for a motion. The motion was made by Councilor **Meeker** to approve up to \$2,000 for traffic control and street signs, seconded by Councilor **Spaulding**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

Public Works Director **Whittaker** reported the park tree service previously approved by the Council was completed for \$1,695, down from the \$3,500 for the last crew. The leaf program meeting with Waste Management, scheduled for 11:00 am on January 24th, was open to the public. The IT upgrade had begun. He requested up to \$800 to repair the shop door, which was hanging off the frame and posed an extreme safety hazard. **Mayor Hall** called for a motion to approve funds not to exceed \$800 to repair the shop garage door. The motion was made by Councilor **Meeker**, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

Public Works Director **Whittaker** explained evidence documentation from the City's previous police department was currently stored in an unsecured and unsafe location at the library; the public had access to the room and the ceiling was falling down. He requested up to \$4,000 to repair the evidence room to make it secure, safe, and climate controlled. **Mayor Hall** noted the City was required to keep the evidence from the 1970s to 1990s secured and locked up. Staff clarified the evidence did need to be purged based on the statute of limitations for the crime involved. **Mayor Hall** noted Washington County helped cities purge evidence upon request, but he did not know if a cost was involved. Councilor **Richter** requested to set this aside until the records were purged and Council members could inspect the damage. Councilor **Hale** suggested postponing the matter to obtain appropriate bids for the repairs.

City Council consented to obtain at least three bids for repairing the evidence room.

Public Works Director **Whittaker** reviewed the three quotes obtained to convert to LED lighting, as well as the return on investment and the Oregon Energy Trust associated incentives, and addressed clarifying questions. All of the emergency lighting had been tested, but none of it worked. The Council discussed approving the Public Works shop lighting project as the top priority. City Clerk **Bregante-Candau** added Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) would likely be concerned that the City's building had no back up lighting, which Council should consider given the safety concerns for employees. **Mayor Hall** called for a motion to fund the repairs on the truck bay for \$2,050. The motion was made by Councilor **Spaulding**, seconded by Councilor **Hale**. Councilor **Richter** believed everything should be done

at once, especially if OSHA was expected to do a consultation. Public Works Director **Whittaker** explained that of the five electricians he called, only one came out to make a bid. Contractors' ability to make more money in the larger communities, even locally-based contractors, resulted in Staff having difficulty in hiring work done. Mayor **Hall** called for further questions, none heard. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0. **City Council** consented to have Public Works Director Whittaker obtain specific costs to repair the City's emergency lighting.

Public Works Director **Whittaker** requested approval of \$315 for the registration fee for the Oregon Association of Water Utilities (OAWU) 39th Annual Management and Technical Conference in Bend from March 6 to 10, 2017. Following discussion, Council agreed to revisit approving travel expenses when more information was available. Mayor **Hall** called for a motion. The motion to approve \$315 for registration at the OAWU training conference was made by Councilor **Richter** seconded by Councilor **Hale**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

Public Works Director **Whittaker** left the meeting at this time due to illness.

City Recorder's Report: Recorder **Blanchette** presented her report. Gaston Elementary School was asking for a \$300 donation from the City in support of its annual carnival, the same as last year. Staff was struggling with the limits of the PayChex Flex system, especially with regard to overtime hours, and still evaluating whether it would be the best system for the City. The paperwork on obtaining a debit/credit card reader from US Bank was ongoing. Given the status of the City's audits, which were two years behind, no figures to date were available with regard to the City's finances, which would continue to be a struggle until the City completed the conversion to QuickBooks from Springbrook. System development charges had been paid for the new house to be built at 315 Church St. Hiring Mike Marr to work with the City's finance system has worked very well, especially in preparing for the 2013/2014 fiscal year audit. Staff had the 2012/2013 draft audit reports and was working to provide the 2013/2014 draft report. Obtaining missing PERS reports for the City's employees continued to be a work in progress. Staff sent the RFP for the Country Lane Water Booster Pump Station to the *Daily Journal of Commerce* (DJC) and bid proposals were to be received by February 2nd and the work should be completed by June 2017. In February, a public hearing would be held on the school's conditional use request, variance request, and site development plan for the new school for which a bond measure passed in the last election. The auditor recommended including the total for the bills payable when the bills list was approved and also appointing two Councilors to review and initial each bill for further oversight of revenue and expenditures.

City Clerk's Report: Clerk **Bregante-Candau** highlighted her report. The City's website www.cityofgaston.com was now finished and official email addresses would be available with the domain name. Staff was working diligently to obtain an online payment program for citizens to pay for their bills, citations, fees related to the forms provided, etc. Staff sent two water accounts to collections through Western Collections Bureau, as well as 15 unpaid Municipal Court citations. City Staff met with the Gaston School District to provide input on traffic flow through the school and its effect on the surrounding streets. She had worked with OSHA to set up monthly safety meetings and the first was held January 10th for which minutes were available. OSHA would do a consultation for training and to identify areas for the City to work on; however, no violations could be cited at that time. She and Recorder **Blanchette** signed up for a webinar training on the grant writing process to prepare an application for a 20% matching grant to purchase the Bart Brown property and develop the park. Mayor **Hall** called for a motion to

approve \$300 for the Gaston School District Carnival. The motion was made by Councilor **Meeker**, seconded by Councilor **Hale**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: Jeffries.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Wage Committee Report. Councilor **Spaulding** reported he needed to meet with his committee members to draw up an official draft to present for approval at the next City Council meeting.

VI. COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilor **Richter** reported that with regard to installing a traffic light at the Front St (Highway 47)/Main St intersection, a City of Yamhill staff person told him to send a letter on City letterhead asking the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to study the intersection. Councilor **Spaulding** suggested that the Gaston School District also send an official request because the school buses could not get out onto the highway either.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEW BUSINESS:

VIII. City Clerk Employee Review – 6th month. The City Clerk's employee evaluation was distributed for the Council review. Clerk **Bregante-Candau** requested the review be done sooner than the February meeting since the employee review was due in December. Mayor **Hall** noted an Executive Session might also be needed regarding the real estate negotiations and wage report. Following a brief discussion, an Executive Session was scheduled as a special meeting on January 25th at 7:00 pm.

IX. OLCC License Renewal. The motion to renew the Oregon State Liquor licenses for the One Horse Tavern and Gaston Supermarket was made by Councilor **Jeffries**, seconded by Councilor **Meeker**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

X. Library Lease Renewal. Mayor **Hall** confirmed the attorney had reviewed the new contract, which proposed \$2 for the annual commercial lease and \$1 per month for rent. The motion to approve the Library Renewal Lease for 2017 made by Councilor **Richter** and seconded by Councilor **Jeffries**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

XI. City Council Procedures. The motion to approve the City Council Procedures was made by Councilor **Spaulding**, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

XII. Water Policy. Mayor **Hall** noted the Water Policy was presented by Public Works Director **Whittaker** during the work session. The motion to adopt the Water Policy was made by Councilor **Meeker**, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

XIII. Resolution 17-001: A resolution pursuant to establishing rates for the use and benefit of water service provided by and through the City of Gaston. Mayor **Hall** confirmed the

correction discussed in work session had been made to the resolution. Recorder **Blanchette** noted effective date and signature date of the resolution had been changed appropriately. Mayor **Hall** explained the resolution adopted the City's current water rates, which had never been formally adopted according to City records. Council could do a rate study and change the water rates in the future. The water rate study process could begin as early as next month. Public Works Director Brent **Whittaker** had begun researching water rates at different cities and provided information to Council. Councilor **Hale** noted the pie chart illustrating the huge profit the City was making on its water rates versus costs. Mayor **Hall** stated that according to the last mayor, the City charged high water rates to build up funds for the water system which was in great disrepair and required large expenditures. Improvement costs were the same for a larger city but Gaston's tax base was considerably smaller. Recorder **Blanchette** confirmed systems development charges for new development went toward future infrastructure costs. The Council discussed the City's high water rates and the need to identify the costs to make the necessary water systems repairs and improvements to build a sustainable infrastructure. Once the costs were identified, Council could review the situation and then consider lowering water rates. Mayor **Hall** understood Gaston paid the highest water rates in Washington County. He noted the Water Master Plan outlined ten priority projects needed to upgrade the water system that cost millions of dollars. He agreed to meet with Councilor Hale to add reducing water rates to the Council's agenda. The motion to adopt Resolution 17-001, A RESOLUTION PURSUANT TO ESTABLISHING RATES FOR THE USE AND BENEFIT OF WATER SERVICE PROVIDED BY AND THROUGH THE CITY OF GASTON was made by Councilor **Jeffries**, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

OLD BUSINESS:

XIV. Hiland Water Contract The Council discussed whether to renew the Hiland Water Contract, which expired on December 31, 2016. Councilor **Richter** suggested hiring Richard Howard at Yamhill, who would do the same work at a lower cost. Recorder **Blanchette** added that LA Water Co-op said they would do the work if Yamhill could not. City Council consented that the City had received appropriate service from Hiland. Councilor **Hale** understood the contract would be approved for 90 days until Public Works Director **Whittaker** got up to speed. Clerk **Bregante-Candau** reported on several issues Staff had with Hiland not wanting to do what was needed for the City, which often required extra work by Staff. Mayor **Hall** responded he was aware of those issues and was involved with discussions with Hiland Water; however, such disconnects were not uncommon when transitioning to a new vendor. Clerk **Bregante-Candau** stated that given the amount of money paid by the City, Hiland should have acquired proper knowledge about the City and known exactly what they were doing being the DRC. She agreed Hiland got better as they went along. Mayor **Hall** called for a motion. The motion to not extend the Hiland Water Contract for 2017 was made by Councilor **Jeffries**, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

The motion to appoint Richard **Howard** to be the City's DRC was made by Councilor **Richter**, seconded by Councilor **Jeffries**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

COMPLAINTS:

XV. Employee Complaint: Mayor **Hall** stated the employee complaint was reviewed by the supervisor, reviewed by the City attorney, and consulted with CIS, the City's insurance company. The issue had been resolved and while nothing could be stated publicly in open session, all the documentation would be provided to Council at the next Executive Session for review.


MINUTES: Mayor **Hall** called for a motion to adopt the November 2016 Work Session and Regular Session minutes as presented. The motion was made by Councilor **Jeffries**, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE January 2017: Recorder **Blanchette** confirmed she would include the memo line identifying what an item was for, which had been inadvertently left out of the new report format. Councilor **Jeffries** moved to accept the January 2017 accounts payable list in the total amount of \$63,327.92, seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed. Ayes: **Spaulding, Meeker, Jeffries, Hale, Richter, and Martin**. Nays: 0. After asking for volunteers, Mayor **Hall** appointed Councilors Spaulding and Hale to sign off on the bills.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor **Hall** asked for any further business, none heard. Meeting adjourned at 9:13 PM.



Mayor Tony Hall

Attest: 

City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette